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June 9, 1966

Mr. Robert H. Bahner
Archivist of the United States
Washington, D.C. 20408

Dear Mr. Bahner,

The concluding sentence of your letter of June 7 is one that, from my experience at the Archives, I can both honestly and wholeheartedly endorse. I have always been impressed with the high concept of and dedication to their important responsibilities of every employee of the Archives on whatever level with whom I have had any contact. I am satisfied also they intend no partiality, that policy intends no partiality, and I know of no partiality. As I told Mr. Johnson, my reference was to Mr. Manchester's access to material to which I have been denied access, but prior to the end of the Commission's work. This is partiality, if not by the Archives, and there remains no Commission to which I may protest it.

A reading of the enclosure convinces me that I am properly entitled to access to each of those things to which I have requested access, whether or not they are in the archive, for none of them falls properly within the specified or implied prohibitions.

With regard to your third paragraph, my argument is not with you. But with whom else am I to argue? Whether or not access to Mrs. Kennedy's testimony is in poor taste - and if it is, what should I say of much that has been published, about the splattering of the President's brains, etc. there is something more important involved. The Commission was far from omniscient. In fact, it is a kindness to say it was often far from even accurate. I have left a copy of my book with Mr. Johnson, and I am confident even an unfriendly reading will disclose I found things in the record neither the Report nor others found. Mrs. Kennedy's testimony is that of perhaps the only close eyewitness to her husband's assassination. It is for this reason alone that I want access to her testimony, and I will accept any restriction, any prohibition, on any other aspect of it. I will make no notes on anything else, request no copies of anything else. I will agree carte blanche to any kind of supervision of this access. I am interested in but one thing: learning what the Report has denied, suppressed, misrepresented, distorted or simply been honestly wrong about this matter. I submit this is a legitimate interest and a reasonable and proper request. And in the absence of a Commission, to whom am I to address this request other than you?

Herewith I want to call to your attention what I have already called to the attention of the interested agencies, that certain of the evidence withheld from the archive, and the unclassified part of it, is improperly withheld. This includes the various bullets and fragments, including test bullets and fragments; the spectrographic analyses; the pictures and X-rays of the autopsy; and any other autopsy or medical papers of any kind or description of any of the three deceased, particularly of the President and Officer Tippit. To these also I want access, and I submit my book more than establishes the legitimacy of this request.

Thank you for the consideration of Archives personnel and their kindnesses.

Sincerely,
John Edgar Hoover